

TO THE

PAUL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report for 1895.

Inspection of the District.

During the year I have periodically inspected all parts of the district. I have examined 28 premises on account of nuisances existing, and 120 houses have been visited by the Sanitary Inspector or myself on account of infectious diseases.

At your request I have enquired into the condition of the premises at Florence Terrace, and embodied the results in a Special Report. I am glad to know that your Authority has since decided to run a new main sewer up St. Peter's Hill, and to ask the owner of this property to connect therewith, as the present arrangement of combined drainage is most distinctly to be condemned.

I also visited, at your request, the premises occupied by Mr. Barnes, dairy farmer, &c., at Higher Fawgan, and reported as to the possibilities of improved drainage. I find that alterations are now being effected by the owner.

The houses at Antoine Terrace, Newlyn, are without proper privy and ash-pit accommodation. I have reported the fact to you, and hope that proper sanitary arrangements will be insisted upon.

The premises occupied by Jno. Maddern at the Gernick, Mousehole, mentioned in my Annual Report for 1894, remain in a most unsatisfactory condition. New drainage has been laid, but stable-sweepings and all kinds of refuse still mingle, and remain without cover from the weather.

The River.

I am glad to record that the river-bank, swept down by last year's flood, has been restored, and the broken pipe near St. Peter's Bridge repaired. I have also noted with pleasure throughout the year a higher cleanliness of the river-bed.

House Accommodation and Repairs.

One new house has been built at Newlyn and 3 in the country portion of the district. The accommodation thus remains much as it was, and more houses, with proper sanitary provisions, are still needed near Newlyn. Five houses at Mousehole have been repaired and put into better sanitary condition, one having been dealt with by your Authority after refusal to proceed on the part of the owner.

Drainage.

The matter of the extension of the sewers at Newlyn to points outside the harbour limits has been embodied in a plan, which has been for many months in the hands of the Local Government Board. The speedy solution of this question is of the utmost importance to the health of Newlyn, to whom delay spells accumulated nuisance, sickness, and distress.

Water Supply.

The supply of water to Newlyn and Mousehole seems satisfactory, both on the points of quantity and quality. Your Authority is to be congratulated on the excellent work recently done at Newlyn and Mousehole in protecting some of the supplies from contamination at their source. The carriage of the water to within a reasonable proximity to the dwelling houses, now at a distance therefrom, will be a great boon, to Newlyn especially. These schemes also, I understand, still remain under the consideration of the Local Government Board.

It is very gratifying to me to record that during the year the Newlyn Harbour Commissioners have provided a plentiful supply of good water from Trewidden to the North Pier for the use of the Pier and boats.

A case of Typhoid at Antoine Terrace, Newlyn, drew my attention to the pool used by the inhabitants and others for drinking purposes, which runs grave danger of contamination from the near presence of cesspits and house refuse thrown and standing on the ground in the courts of the houses there, and the absence of concreting around the pool itself. I understand the owners have been notified to do the concreting. Unless the cesspits be done away with, and proper ashpits placed, the principal risk from surface washings will remain.

At Tredavoe, it is gratifying to record, that the well supply has been covered and protected by your Authority.

At Trevithal, I understand, that the owners of the well have been notified to fill it in. This will leave the inhabitants dependent on the pool on the moor, which is open to any chance contamination, and placed at a distance from their houses.

School Closets.

The large cesspits are still allowed to remain at the Newlyn Board School close to the class-rooms, whose air is often poisoned by the stench through the necessarily open windows.

Newlyn is still scavenged three days a week by the Council refuse-cart, and Mousehole by a man with a barrow.

Bake-houses, Slaughter-house, Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milk-shops.

There are 12 bake-houses at Newlyn and Mousehole, unregistered, and one slaughter-house at Newlyn, unregistered but well kept. There are 59 dairies and cowsheds in the district, and 15 milk-shops—10 at Newlyn and 5 at Mousehole. All these are duly registered and inspected.

Monthly and Special Reports.

Throughout the year monthly reports, showing the sickness and deaths within the district, have been forwarded by me to your Authority, and to the County Council, on forms supplied by the latter. Two special reports on the scarlatina epidemic, urging the closing of the Paul Board School, were sent to you on the 20th of June and 29th of July. Copies of these were transmitted at the same time to the Local Government Board and Cornwall County Council.

Tables A and B.—Vital Statistics and Comparison of Rates for District generally, and of Death-rates within the separate localities for the years 1892, 1893, 1894, and 1895.

Tables A and B show the births within the district during the year to have numbered 193 (of males 101, of females 92), the deaths 100 (of males 42, of females 58), a natural increase of 93 persons. The birth-rate remains high—32.475 per 1000; the death-rate of about average intensity—16.83. As usual more deaths of females than of males are registered. The infantile mortality is higher than in recent years—186.53, but includes 5 cases of premature birth (two pairs of twins and another). Allowing for these the rate does not seem disproportionate. The zymotic death-rate for the year is 2.19 per 1000.

The following table shows the distribution of deaths between the sub-localities, while the latter columns compare their respective death-rates for 1892, 1893, 1894, and 1895.

Population.				Deaths.		Death-rates.							
(Census 1891.)						1892	1893		1894		1895		
NEWLYN	3,323	...	48	...	13.54	...	21.06	...	16.6	...	14.44
MOUSEHOLE	1,602	...	21	...	12.48	...	14.35	...	14.4	...	13.1
REST OF DISTRICT	1,036	...	31	...	18.34	...	24.13	...	16.45	...	29.92
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5,961				100		14.09	19.79		15.97		16.83		
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Mousehole again shows the lowest death-rate, while that of the country district is this year notably increased. Mousehole records no deaths between 1 year of age and 33. Of its 21 deaths 10 were of persons of above 65 years of age. Of the 31 deaths in the rural portion of the district (giving for this part the very high death-rate of nearly 30 per 1000), no less than 19 were of children under 5 years of age. Of these 3 were due to scarlatina, 1 to diphtheria, and 6 to diseases of the respiratory organs.

Four deaths within the district, all of females, were attributed to phthisis. In the case of one, at the age of 22, the onset of the disease is stated to have been preceded by 6 years of spinal curvature. In the others death took place at the ages of 59, 62, and 66, the disease having at least proved compatible with a fairly extended span of years. Indeed the comparative immunity of the inhabitants from deaths from this and from heart disease (2 deaths only in the year), and from rheumatic fever (1 death), points to it as an appropriate habitat for large sections of the invalid world.

From cancer 4 deaths are recorded—of a male at Lower Trevelloe, a female at Newlyn, and 2 females at Mousehole.

Eight inquests have been held—2 at Newlyn, 3 at Mousehole, 3 in the rural parts of the district.

Zymotic Death-rates and Infectious Diseases.

If we subtract the zymotic death-rate from the total death-rate for each of the 4 years above given we arrive at the following instructive result ;—

	1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.
DEATH-RATE	14.09 ...	19.79 ...	15.97 ...	16.83
ZYMOTIC DEATH-RATE ...	1.006 ...	5.87 ...	1.777 ...	2.19
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	13.08	13.92	14.79	14.64
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

It will thus be seen how the death-rate, freed from the incidence of zymotic and mainly preventable disease, has for this period of 4 years kept within a narrow range of from 13 to 15 per 1000 per annum. Here is a practical ideal that by suppression of insanitary conditions, and by proper isolation and disinfection in cases of infectious diseases, we may reasonably hope to reach. All that exceeds is the measure of our impotence or negligence in these respects.

No less than 120 cases of infectious disease have been notified to me during the year. There have been 104 cases of scarlet fever (5 deaths), 3 of diphtheria (2 deaths), 2 of erysipelas, and 11 of typhoid fever.

The cases of scarlatina occurred in all parts of the district, but less at Newlyn than elsewhere, probably owing to the great epidemic of 1893 having there all but exhausted its appropriate soil.

The cases of diphtheria occurred at Newlyn and at Higher Fawgan—at the last in the house of a dairy-farmer. In this case it was necessary to rigorously separate the entire infected household from the dairy, cows, and milk-supply, and I gladly record the fact that in this and in all recent cases in which this measure has had to be taken the proprietor has, in marked contrast to other years, submitted without unduly prolonged hesitation to the proper necessities of the case.

The cases of erysipelas occurred at Mousehole. The 11 cases of typhoid fever all occurred at Newlyn, where 4 deaths from diarrhœa (the only ones within the district) also took place. The typhoids commenced in June, after a long spell of drought, and continued after the onset of the October rain, lasting until the end of the year. Three infants died from diarrhœa in August, and an aged person from the same in October. During the long dry summer Newlyn suffered acutely from the long absence of rainfall, its most efficient scavenger, and the effluvia of its harbour-bed and refuse heaps unmistakably asserted themselves. A lessened total rainfall for the year, however welcome on other grounds, is to Newlyn a serious sanitary disadvantage.

In addition to the above-mentioned zymotic deaths, 2 deaths of children from whooping cough were recorded in January, and 2 of adults from influenza in March.

The Scarlatina Epidemic.

During this outbreak every effort has been made by the Sanitary Inspector and myself to stay its progress by all available means within our power. Particular

attention has been given to the washing and disinfection of the body-linen of the sick and of their surroundings, and the duty of isolation has been preached, while the exclusion of children of infected houses from schools has been constantly secured. Your Authority rendered timely assistance on two occasions by issuing closing orders to the Paul School Board, and gave salutary lessons to the careless by insisting on the proper cleansing and lime-washing of the Paul School, and by successfully prosecuting a parent who wilfully exposed her children when suffering with the disease. But, in spite all, the reckless indifference of parents gave ever ready opportunities for the spread of the epidemic. When, after the disease had claimed a few victims, a stage of something like panic at Paul had succeeded a period of apathetic indifference, and parents grew afraid of committing their children to their own school at Paul Churchtown, the grave mistake was made of admitting some of these to the Mousehole School. Thereupon the cases at Mousehole, hitherto but few, multiplied. Had I known of this movement in time I should have counteracted it by moving your Authority to close the Mousehole School. It is to be hoped that it will never be repeated under like circumstances. It is clear, on consideration of the ways of the people on the one hand, and the close watch kept on the schools by the Inspector and myself on the other, that the school on whose register each child stands is for that child as yet unaffected the safest place of resort in the parish, being the only one from which it is possible with any success to exclude those already subjects of the disease. Of course, if children at these times are permitted to range from school to school it is difficult to trace their movements, and impossible to ensure safety to others, such children, even if healthy, creating unnecessary danger to the others by adding opportunity for the conveyance of contagion from the locality from which they come to the locality to which they go.

During the panic stage the following questions were propounded to me by an anxious parent:—1. “Could not something be done to prevent her children being allowed to go into other people’s houses where there was scarlatina?” 2. “Could not something be done to prevent other people sending children from infected houses into hers?” She appeared to regard any interference in the matter on her own part as unneighbourly and not to be resorted to. I give this as a typical example of parental sense of responsibility. She evidently believed that all the duty there was in the matter belonged to Mr. Chirgwin, myself, and the Paul District Council. As to those who occupy in the parish the honourable position of educators of our young I would ask them at all times to remember the immense responsibility which devolves upon them of safe-guarding the health of the children when in the schools and in their charge. I would draw their attention to the fact that the Sanitary Department of your Council is the only possible judge of the necessity of precautionary measures at any time and of the form that they should take, for it alone has the necessary information and training. It receives all notifications of infectious disease, and keeps its eyes and ears open for the unnotified, it patrols suspected portions of the district, visits the sick, makes diligent enquiry as to possible and probable routes of contagion, and from the first note of warning to the end of the outbreak its acts are part of a deliberate campaign, the successes of which depend alike on its comprehension of the epidemic as a whole, and on its knowledge of the details of its course. Moreover it bears the entire responsibility of all action taken, and is very properly expected to act when occasion arises up to the last limitation of its powers.

I still receive an occasional notification of scarlet fever from Mousehole, or from the rural part (there have so far been ~~4~~ this month), but there is reason to believe that the epidemic has nearly reached its end. It is early yet to say what stage we have arrived at in the outbreak of typhoid at Newlyn.

I am, Gentlemen,

Faithfully yours,

RICHARD DAVEY BOASE,

M.O.H. PAUL.

5, MORRAB ROAD,

PENZANCE,

January 22nd, 1896.

